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**Z-2297**  
**CAMPUS SUITES, LLC**  
**R1 TO R3**

**STAFF REPORT**  
**JULY 13, 2006**

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**REQUEST MADE, PROPOSED USE, LOCATION:**

Petitioner, Campus Suites LLC, with consent of owner Robert F. Mertz and represented by attorney Joseph Bumbleburg, is requesting R3 rezoning of twenty acres for a proposed gated, multi-family complex of nine buildings plus one clubhouse, located on the east side of Klondike Road, just south of the CR 250 N intersection, Wabash 11 (SW) 23-5. This nonbinding proposal will create nine apartment buildings containing 756 bedrooms.

**ZONING HISTORY AND AREA ZONING PATTERNS:**

This land is currently zoned R1. Prior to 1998 the property was zoned IR (Industrial Reserve.) With the adoption of NUZO all IR zoned property became OR (Office Research.) Later in 1998, APC sponsored a rezoning of all the OR zoned properties in Wabash Township; at that time this property became R1 and the property across Klondike Road to the west became I3 (Z-1808). Zoning north of the site is A (Agriculture) and R3 (Z-1507 & 2037). Zoning adjacent to the east and south associated with Wake Robin Estates Subdivision is R1. The 31.48 acre site to the south was rezoned in May of 2003 and received preliminary plat approval for 80 single family lots in March of this year (Z-2115 & S-3307).

**AREA LAND USE PATTERNS:**

This site is actively farmed. Homes associated with Wake Robin Estates II, Phase 2 are immediately to the east. To the south is the recently approved 80 lot expansion, Wake Robin Estates III. Across Klondike is a vacant manufacturing site (formerly Roadworks) located at the southwest corner of the intersection with CR 250 N that backs up to the railroad tracks. West beyond the tracks is a developing single and two-family housing community. Immediately to the northeast is the southernmost edge of Copper Beech apartments. Lafayette Limo is located on the A-zoned land north of the site. Further north along Klondike are a variety of residential enclaves including duplexes, apartments and a large mobile home park. Klondike Elementary and Middle Schools are located approximately one mile north at the intersection of Klondike and US 52.

**TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION:**

The site has frontage on Klondike, a rural secondary arterial according to the *Thoroughfare Plan*. It is a two-lane, paved road carrying an average of 6,665 vehicles a day near the CR 250 N intersection according to counts taken in 2004. A non-binding site plan shows a single access drive onto this road. The north property line of this

rezone is the approved western terminus of the Cumberland Avenue extension, a proposed secondary arterial in the *Draft Thoroughfare Plan*. The site plan shows a 30' half-width right-of-way set aside for the new roadway. Once constructed, petitioner plans to add an entrance onto Cumberland. Driveway improvements proposed in the right-of-way of either street would have to be approved by the County Highway Engineer.

According to Henry Morton, the managing director of the development, there will be a bus turnaround in the parking lot to allow CityBus access and create a bus stop on site. CityBus currently has a route that travels along Klondike and stops at Copper Beech.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND UTILITY CONSIDERATIONS:**

Staff has not received confirmation regarding service to petitioner's site, but land to the north is served by Indiana-American Water Company and by American Suburban Utilities. The subdivision on the south is served by the Indiana-American Water Company and City of West Lafayette sewer. Stormwater control plans will need to be approved by the County Drainage Board.

According to the "Soil Survey of Tippecanoe County" the majority of the site has Mahalasville-Treaty soils. The soil survey states that, "Because of the ponding, these soils are generally unsuited to use as sites for dwellings."

There are no buffer yard requirements for this site since all the surrounding area is residential. At a meeting between the developers and APC, Henry Morton stated that they intend to put a fence on the south and west side of the site.

#### **STAFF COMMENTS:**

Petitioner is attempting to rezone twenty acres of R1 land directly northwest of Wake Robin Estates. Currently, the adopted *Comprehensive Plan* shows an agricultural future for this site. When the matrix was recalculated taking into account the availability of utilities, a residential future becomes evident, but density is not addressed.

The site plan submitted shows a large scale apartment complex planned on the southeast corner of Klondike and the proposed Cumberland extension. The conceptual layout submitted shows nine apartment buildings and a clubhouse as part of a closed-gate community. Directly south of the site is an addition of Wake Robin Estates in the preliminary stages of development. Although the petitioner's site plan shows no connection to Wake Robin Estates, plans for Wake Robin include a stub-street connection to the proposed site.

With the Cumberland extension planned along the north side of the site there will be a natural separation between low density residential on the south side and higher density on the north. Copper Beech Apartments and the mobile home park on the north side of the planned extension have already begun this development pattern.

Klondike Road has a high traffic count, deteriorating road conditions, and minimal shoulders. Sidewalks are a missing element from this roadway. Not having sidewalks creates problems for pedestrians because it forces them to walk in or near the road when visiting the small commercial strip mall located north of the site. Pedestrian passage on roadsides slows traffic and creates an unsafe environment for all travelers. These corridor problems would be exacerbated by a large increase in daily traffic flow. No matter how much public transportation there is to and from campus, there will still be a large increase in traffic flow.

In a meeting between developers and staff, petitioner explained how this dorm-style, student-oriented development would be state-of-the-art. They also presented information on vacancy rates of other apartment complexes to support their stance that there is a need for high-end student apartments. Staff's impression from socioeconomic information gathered for the transportation study shows vacancy rates were high even though Mr. Morton's information seems to claim otherwise.

The proposal seems like an admirable one but misplaced geographically. A better location for a development like this would be closer to campus. A development of R1B or R2 would be better suited to fit within the current zoning scheme. This would allow for a connection to be built from Wake Robin to Klondike and/or the Cumberland extension and alleviate potential congestion problems on Klondike.

Staff recommends against this rezone based on the Cumberland extension will be a dividing line between high density to the north and lower density to the south. Furthermore, Klondike can not handle more vehicular flow associated with a high density development in its poor state and this development would create an anomalous zoning district that prohibits traffic flow from Wake Robin. There are many alternative sites better suited for this development that are within a one mile radius of the proposed location. This development is no doubt a fantastic plan for a R3 site; it has desirable amenities, an attractive layout and a professional management team. However, staff does not feel this development would best serve the existing street layout and surrounding land use pattern.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Denial



